

KENTUCKY DRIVERS MANUAL





COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

ERNIE FLETCHER
GOVERNOR



Dear Kentucky Driver,

Driving is a privilege that will allow you to travel and experience all the wonderful things the Commonwealth of Kentucky has to offer. Along with this privilege comes great responsibility. This manual is created to give you the necessary foundation to safely meet those responsibilities as a new driver. Study this manual well and you will be on your way to a safe and enjoyable driving experience.

Remember to wear your seatbelt and make sure that all children are secured in a federally approved child restraint seat. The traffic laws of Kentucky were put in place to protect the safety and well being of all people traveling upon our highways. I ask that you obey these laws and make the roadways safe for everyone.

Congratulations and best wishes for a safe and happy driving experience!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature of Ernie Fletcher in black ink.

Ernie Fletcher
Governor

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER M/F/D





COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
KENTUCKY STATE POLICE

MARK L. MILLER
COMMISSIONER

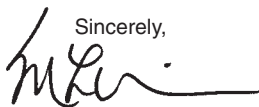


Dear Kentucky Driver,

The Kentucky Drivers Manual has been prepared by the Kentucky State Police to provide you with the knowledge and basic skills to become a safe and courteous driver. By thoroughly studying this manual, you will develop good driving habits and a better understanding of Kentucky traffic laws. It should be your goal to learn everything you can before starting your driving career. By committing yourself to this goal, you will in turn make the roadways of Kentucky safer for everyone.

I would like to close by reminding you that Kentucky law requires the use of safety belts and approved child restraint seats. These laws were passed to protect you and your passengers and they are strictly enforced. I sincerely hope your driving experience is enjoyable and that you commit to making our roadways safe by following the traffic laws of the Commonwealth.

Wishing you the very best with your new driving privilege.

Sincerely,


Mark L. Miller
Commissioner
Kentucky State Police

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER M/F/D



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Whenever the masculine gender is used in this Manual, it is used and intended in a generic sense to include both male and female.

GRADUATED LICENSING LAWS FOR NEW DRIVERS

The Graduated Licensing Program became effective October 1, 1996. It affects permit holders and license holders under the age of 18. Graduated Licensing requires an extra set of qualifications for young drivers.

- Permit holders under the age of 18 may not drive between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. unless the person can demonstrate good cause for driving.
- Permit holders must be accompanied by a licensed driver, at least 21 years of age, occupying the seat beside the driver.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs is prohibited.
- Persons under 21 must hold the instruction permit for 180 days before applying for the skills test.
- Applicants who pass the driving skills test will be issued a distinctive “Under 21” license.
- All drivers under the age of 21 are subject to “Zero Alcohol Tolerance.”
- All drivers are subject to Kentucky’s point system. A driver under the age of 18 who accumulates more than six points may have his driving privilege suspended. For drivers over the age of 18, an accumulation of 12 points will result in possible suspension of driving privilege.
- A four-hour Graduated Licensing Course must be completed by newly-licensed drivers ages 16 and 17 who have not completed a driver education course from a high school or from a state-licensed driver training school that has been approved by the Department of Transportation.
 - After passing the road test, the License Examiner will submit names of students who will be required to complete the Graduated Licensing class to the Division of Driver Licensing. All students enrolled in the Graduated Licensing class will receive written correspondence from the Division of Driver Licensing regarding the date and the time for the class. **FAILURE TO COMPLETE THE CLASS WITHIN ONE YEAR OF RECEIVING YOUR LICENSE WILL RESULT IN YOUR LICENSE BEING CANCELLED.**

For more information regarding this program, call the Graduated Licensing office at (502) 564-6800, extension 5363, or visit the website at <http://transportation.ky.gov/drlc/>.

THE LICENSING PROCESS

To be eligible to apply for a Kentucky Operator's License, Motorcycle License, or Moped License, you must have reached your sixteenth birthday, and your driving privilege must not have been withdrawn in this state or any other state. You will begin the process in the Circuit Court Clerk's Office in your county of residence.

When applying for an instruction permit or license for the first time, you must present the following:

- Social Security Card.
- Birth Certificate.
- For applicants under the age of 18, the signature and license or social security number of parent or legal guardian must be listed on the application.

These rules and regulations have been established by the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet. The Circuit Court Clerk is required to follow these rules. It is his responsibility to determine that the application for a driver's license is complete and accurate and that the applicant meets the requirements to apply for a Kentucky license.

After the Clerk has prepared the application, the Kentucky State Police License Examiner will administer the tests. You will be given a vision-screening test to determine if you meet minimum visual requirements and a written knowledge test of the information contained in this manual. If you fail the written test, you may return the next day that tests are given in your county. Applicants may take the written test a total of six times. If you fail the written tests six times, you must wait six months before trying again.

An applicant for a moped license, who has no other type of license, must take only the written test and vision screening test in order for a license to be issued. A road test is not required for a moped license.

After passing the required tests, you will return to the Circuit Court Clerk's Office where you will be issued an instruction permit. This permit is valid for one year and may be renewed. If the permit is not renewed within one year of the expiration date of the previous permit, the written and vision tests must be repeated.

You may apply for the road skills test 180 days from the issue date of the first permit, if you are under the age of 21. If you are age 21 or over, you must hold your permit 30 days before being eligible to take the road test. Please check with the local Examiner or Circuit Court Clerk for the testing availability in your county.

If you fail the road test, you are required by law to wait seven days before another test can be administered. If you fail the road test six times, you must wait six months before another test will be given. You will then have only two attempts to pass the test.

Once you have passed the road skills test, the Examiner will record the results and send you back to the Circuit Clerk's Office for your license to be issued.

Your driver's license record is maintained by the Transportation Cabinet, Division of Driver Licensing, in Frankfort. This agency keeps track of all traffic citations, accidents, suspensions, reinstatements, and assignments to traffic school. They alone have control of your driving file. Any questions concerning licensing qualifications or your driving record should be directed to that agency.

Driving is an enormous responsibility. In your hands you place your life and the lives of all drivers and pedestrians around you. Please study this manual, and have a safe driving career.

This manual will give you information on safe driving rules and practices to help you become a safer driver. The information will help you pass the driver test. The Kentucky Driver Manual is also available on the Internet:

Kentucky State Police Web Site:
www.kentuckystatepolice.org

Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Web Site:
www.kytc.state.ky.us/DRLIC/

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR NAME

If you change your address or name for any reason, you must obtain a duplicate license within 10 days. You may be cited by a police officer for not changing your address or name. If your name change is a result of marriage or divorce, please bring the proper legal documents showing proof. Contact your Circuit Court Clerk's Office to make these changes.

RENEWAL OR DUPLICATE LICENSE

Your permit or license is valid from the date issued through the expiration date shown on the permit or license. All licenses issued after July, 2000, will expire 30 days from the license holder's birthdate, unless suspended or revoked. If you are 21 or over, you may renew your license up to six months before the expiration date by applying in person at your local Circuit Court Clerk's Office.

If you lose your license, a duplicate may be obtained by applying at your local Circuit Clerk's Office. There is a \$6.00 charge for all duplicate licenses. You must show positive identification, such as a social security card and a typed proof of residence address, to get a duplicate permit or license.

RESIDENTS SERVING IN THE MILITARY

Residents serving in the military may renew by mail or by personal designee when, at the time of expiration, they are outside the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This does **not** include CDL renewals.

HOW TO OBTAIN A KENTUCKY OPERATOR'S LICENSE (Frequently Asked Questions)

WHY ARE DRIVERS LICENSED?

- To ensure that each driver has the basic skills necessary to be a safe, efficient, and responsible driver.

WHO NEEDS A KENTUCKY LICENSE?

- Any current or new resident of Kentucky who plans to drive a motor vehicle.

WHO DOES NOT NEED A KENTUCKY DRIVER'S LICENSE?

- Any person in the Armed Forces of the United States who has an operator's license from the United States, and who is operating an official vehicle in the course of his service to our country.
- Members of the military on active duty and their dependents who hold a valid license from another state.
- Nonresidents working in Kentucky who hold a valid license from another state.
- Full-time students enrolled in school or college with a valid license from another state.
- Operators of road machinery, farm tractors, or other farm implements being used for the purpose for which they were designed.

WHO MAY NOT HAVE A LICENSE?

- Anyone under 16 years of age.
- Anyone whose license has been suspended or revoked and not reinstated.
- Any person judged by a court to be mentally incompetent.
- Anyone who has a physical or mental impairment which makes it unsafe for him to drive.
- Any person who is unable to understand highway warnings or direction signs in the English language.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR OBTAINING A KENTUCKY LICENSE?

- The applicant must be a resident of Kentucky.
- Applicants must be at least 16 years of age. (A first-time applicant must bring his social security card and original or certified copy of his birth certificate).
- A parent or legal guardian must sign the application, if the applicant is under the age of 18.
- Applicants must pass the vision, signs, rules, and road tests.

WHERE DO I GET MY LICENSE?

- You must apply at the Circuit Court Clerk's Office in your county of residence. (For more information regarding testing day(s), you may contact your local Examiner or Circuit Court Clerk.)

WHAT MUST I BRING WITH ME TO APPLY FOR A PERMIT OR LICENSE?

- Your social security card, **which has not been laminated.**
- An original or certified copy of your birth certificate.
- The parent or legal guardian of applicants under the age of 18 must sign the application. A legal guardian must have a certified copy of guardianship papers.

WHAT WILL THE TEST TO OBTAIN A PERMIT CONSIST OF?

- A vision examination is required. (Minimum visual acuity of 20/40 is required, or the applicant will be referred to a vision specialist.)
- A written knowledge test which will contain questions regarding driving rules, regulations, procedures, and highway signs. You will find all information for the test in this manual. Applicants must make a minimum score of 80% to pass this test.

ARE SPECIAL PROGRAMS AVAILABLE?

- A bioptic program with special training provided by the Kentucky Department for the Blind is available. For further information regarding this program, call 502-564-4754.
- Tests can be given orally for applicants who cannot read the English language. However, the signs portion of the test must be answered by the applicant from his own knowledge and understanding.
- Tests in several foreign languages are available.

WHEN ARE ROAD TESTS GIVEN IN MY COUNTY?

- Please check with your local Examiner or Circuit Court Clerk regarding the schedule for your county. A complete listing of counties requiring appointments for road tests are listed in the back of this manual. For counties that require an appointment, the appointment must be made before a test will be administered.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR TAKING THE ROAD TEST?

- A valid Kentucky permit which has been held for 180 days by applicants under the age of 21 and 30 days by applicants 21 and older. There are **no exceptions** to the waiting periods.
- A licensed driver 21 years of age or older must accompany you to the testing site.
- The vehicle you use for testing must be properly registered, and proof of liability insurance is required. One of the following will be required as proof:
 1. A proof-of-insurance card furnished by the insurance company.
 2. A current insurance policy for that vehicle.
 3. A binder from an insurance agent, in writing, stating that insurance is in force.

NOTE: Rental cars must have the driver's name listed on the rental contract as an operator.

WHAT EQUIPMENT IS REQUIRED FOR MY VEHICLE?

BRAKES. Every motor vehicle, when operated upon a highway, shall be equipped with brakes adequate to control the movement of, and to stop and hold, the vehicle. There shall be separate means of applying the brakes, each of which shall be effective to apply the brakes to at least two wheels. If the separate means are connected in any way, they shall be so constructed that failure of any one part of the operating mechanism shall not leave the motor vehicle without brakes on at least two wheels.

LIGHTS. Your vehicle must have two headlights and a taillight. Headlights on high beam must be strong enough to light the road sufficiently to reveal a person 350 feet ahead. They must not shine a glaring light into the eyes of an oncoming driver. When approaching an oncoming vehicle at night, you must use the low beam the last 500 feet before meeting and passing. When following a vehicle, dim your lights before coming closer than 200 feet of the vehicle in front of you.

The rear light, or taillight, must be red and must be lighted and placed so it can be seen 500 feet behind your vehicle. A vehicle must also be equipped with at least one red brake light to the rear. The registration plate must be illuminated so that the letters and numbers of the plate can be read 50 feet away at night.

All motor vehicles must have a brake light. No person shall operate any vehicle required by law to be licensed upon a highway unless it is equipped with a mechanical signal device that would indicate an intention to stop or suddenly decrease speed by illuminating at least one red light on the rear of the vehicle.

LICENSE PLATE. The vehicle must be properly registered with the license plate properly displayed and unobstructed. The registration plate must be illuminated so that the letters and numbers of the plate can be read 50 feet away at night.

WINDSHIELD WIPER. A windshield wiper is required on the driver's side of the windshield. The windshield on every motor vehicle shall be equipped with a device for cleaning rain, snow, or other moisture from the windshield. The device shall be so constructed as to be controlled by the operator of the vehicle.

HORN. Every motor vehicle, and bicycle, when in use on a highway, must be equipped with a horn or other device capable of making an abrupt sound sufficiently loud to be heard under ordinary traffic conditions. Every person operating an automobile or bicycle shall sound the horn or sound device when necessary to warn of the approach of his vehicle. Do not use the horn or sound device unnecessarily.

A MUFFLER must be on the exhaust to reduce noise and annoying smoke, while protecting the occupants from poisonous fumes.

A REARVIEW MIRROR must be so attached that you can see at least 200 feet to the rear of your car.

STEERING GEAR must be in good condition and not have more than one-fourth (1/4) turn free play.

SAFETY GLASS is required equipment for all windows on cars manufactured after 1968.

TURN SIGNALS. Mechanical turn signals are required equipment on your vehicle and must be in working order.

SAFETY BELTS AND SHOULDER BELTS are required for all passenger vehicles built after December 31, 1967. Light trucks and multi-purpose vehicles are required to have safety belts if built after December 31, 1971. If all passenger safety belts are not in working order, the test will not be given.

WHAT EQUIPMENT MUST I NOT HAVE ON MY VEHICLE?

There are certain items that are unlawful to place on a motor vehicle. When taking the driver's test, your vehicle must not have:

- Any red or blue light showing to the front. Green lights are also undesirable.
- Any siren, bell, or whistle.
- A muffler cutout.
- Signs, posters, or stickers on the windshield or any other window in the car, unless required by law.
- More than three extra driving lights or fog lights.
- Vehicles equipped with a louvered rear window must have sideview mirrors. A person shall not operate any motor vehicle required to be registered in the Commonwealth upon any public highway, road, or street, on which vehicle the rear window is composed of, covered by, or treated with any material which has the effect of making the window nontransparent, unless the vehicle is equipped with side mirrors on both sides.
- Heavily-tinted windows in excess of legal standards. A person shall not operate any motor vehicle, required to be registered in the Commonwealth, on any public highway, road, or street on which vehicle the side wings and side windows on either side forward of or adjacent to the operator's seat are composed of, covered by, or treated with any sun-screening material or other product or covering which has the effect of making the window nontransparent or which would alter the window's color, increase its reflectivity, or reduce its light transmittance, except as expressly permitted. A sun-screening material may be applied to such windows if, when tested on one-eighth (1/8) inch clear glass, the material has a total solar reflectance of visible light of not more than twenty-five (25%) percent as measured on the nonfilm side and a light transmittance of at least thirty-five (35%) percent in the visible light range.

WHAT WILL BE INSPECTED ON MY VEHICLE?

- Each applicant must demonstrate that he knows how to operate the following equipment on his vehicle:
 - Headlights.
 - Dimmer Switch.
 - Horn.
 - Windshield Wipers.
 - Turn Signals.
 - Emergency Brake.
 - Emergency Flashers.

WHAT THE ROAD TEST WILL CONSIST OF?

- The Examiner will inspect the vehicle and examine insurance documents.
- Rental vehicles are allowed only if the applicant's name appears on the rental contract as an operator of the vehicle.
- *An Examiner will accompany you on the road test and will occupy the passenger side of the front seat. Therefore, the passenger compartment, seat, and floor area must be clean or the vehicle may be rejected. Both driver and Examiner must wear seat belts, if the vehicle was factory equipped with seat belts. The seat belts must be clean and in working order.*
- Applicants will be required to drive in traffic, encountering normal situations. The Examiner will not play tricks during the road test, and you will not be required to do anything unlawful or illegal.

WHAT WILL BE SCORED ON THE ROAD TEST?

You must be accompanied by a licensed driver who is at least 21 years of age. This licensed driver will not be permitted to ride with you during the road test. He must wait to drive the motor vehicle or ride with you if you do not pass the road test.

- The test will consist of stops, backing, turning the car around, stopping and starting on a hill, parallel parking, intersection approaches, clutch use (if vehicle is so equipped), speed, turns, lane use, right-of-way use, and overall vehicle control.
- Any collision, traffic violation, or dangerous act may result in automatic failure, and the test will not be completed.
- Failure to follow the Examiner's instructions two times during the test will result in being disqualified.
- The applicant will be given a score sheet at the completion of the test, indicating whether he passed or failed. A minimum score of 80% out of 100% is required for passing the test.
 - You will be advised whether you passed or failed, but will not be provided with a numerical score.
 - **Should you not pass the road test, you must wait at least seven days before taking the test again. Practice during this time is recommended.**

HOW DO I TRANSFER MY OUT-OF-STATE LICENSE TO KENTUCKY?

- Apply at your local Circuit Court Clerk's Office (within 30 days of establishing residence).
- Present a social security card and typed proof of residence.
- If the applicant's out-of-state license is expired at least one day, the written and vision tests will be required.

I AM NOT A U.S. CITIZEN. HOW DO I OBTAIN A KENTUCKY LICENSE?

- Applicants who have a Permanent Resident or Resident Alien Card will begin the process by applying at their local Circuit Court Clerk's Office.
- All other non-U.S. applicants will begin the process by visiting their local Department of Transportation (DOT) Field Office. Applicable documents will be examined and, if documents are in order, permission will be granted to receive testing.

COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE

In 1990, in an effort to improve highway safety, the Kentucky General Assembly passed the Kentucky Commercial Driver License Act. This law requires Kentucky to implement the Federal Commercial Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1986. The purpose of this act is to reduce or prevent commercial vehicle collisions, fatalities, and injuries by:

- Permitting commercial drivers to hold only one (1) license.
- Disqualifying commercial drivers who have committed certain serious traffic violations.
- Strengthening commercial driver licensing and testing standards.
- Sharing conviction and licensing information with other states.

One effect of this act now requires Kentucky to have a classified license system. Those persons requiring a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) will hold a Class A, B, or C license.

COMMERCIAL DRIVERS

Commercial drivers are persons who operate commercial motor vehicles whether they are employed to do so or not. This means the Commercial Driver's License requirements apply to volunteer drivers, such as church bus drivers, private and public school bus drivers, mechanics, salesmen, etc. Commercial drivers must have one of the following of the three classes of CDL:

- Class A- Any combination of vehicles with a gross combination weight rating (GCWR) of 26,001 pounds or more, provided that the gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of the vehicle(s) being towed is in excess of 10,000 pounds.
- Class B- Any single vehicle with a GVWR of 26,001 or more pounds or any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR.
- Class C- Any single vehicle less than 26,001 pounds, which is placarded for hazardous materials or designed to transport more than sixteen (16) people including the driver.

WHO DOES NOT NEED A COMMERCIAL DRIVER'S LICENSE (CDL)?

- Operators of passenger trucks and cars, motorcycles, and mopeds.
- Non-civilian operators of military vehicles owned and operated by the military.
- Operators of emergency vehicles, such as firefighters.
- Operators of recreational vehicles.
- A driver of vehicles used exclusively in farm-to-market agricultural transportation, owned and operated by the farmer or his employees, and used within 150 miles of the point of origin.

WHERE CAN I OBTAIN A CDL MANUAL?

A copy of Kentucky's CDL Manual is available from your local Circuit Clerk or on the Internet at www.kentuckystatepolice.org. You can also call 800-542-5990 for more CDL information.

NOTE: AN OUT-OF-STATE LICENSE ISSUED TO A PERSON UNDER THE AGE OF 16 IS NOT VALID ON KENTUCKY STREETS AND HIGHWAYS.